

ORIGINAL

MM 99-25

# Mur-Thom Broadcasting, Inc.

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OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

July 15, 1999

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The Honorable William Kennard  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Reference: MM Docket No. 99-25

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We understand the Commission has issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding low power FM radio stations. We have major concerns with the Commission's proposal of legitimizing pirate operators with so-called low power FM (LPFM) licensed operations.

It appears the the Commission is favoring this as a way to placate pirate radio operators and certain favored groups, which cannot be reconciled with the Telecommunication Acts of 1996 or the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. These potential applicants can follow the same procedures for application for a regular radio broadcasting station licenses with frequencies that are still available.

It also appears that because of the Commission's relaxation of the multimarket ownership of radio stations, large corporations and Wall Street money now dominates many medium and large markets at the expense of minority and small business ownerships. Is allowing LPFM stations a method the Commission is choosing to correct their mistake of allowing market dominance by large corporations, again at the expense of the smaller radio station owners?

Further, how does lowering the standards against signal interference serve in good public service policy and the radio broadcasting industry as a whole. We are required to insure against signal interference based on current standard guidelines. It appears that LPFM operators would be offered a different set of interference rules. Why should LPFM's be permitted to operate under a different standard of interference rules.

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We have invested a sizeable amount of money and energy in our broadcast operation combined with a professionally trained staff that meets our obligations of serving the public interest. Would a low-power FM license owner have the same commitment in hiring professional staff and broadcasting for public good or would they broadcast only for their own narrow vested interests as a "play toy"?

The greatest impact would be in the smaller markets by adding so many stations to an already crowded spectrum. This would typically impact the radio stations operating in the smaller communities who would bear the most adverse effects of signal interference and economics.

We strongly urge you and fellow commissioners to give serious consideration to the adverse effects of low-power FM operations and what they will do to existing small market broadcasting stations who are already properly serving these public interests by providing millions of dollars annually in PSA's.

It is the responsibility of the Commission to provide guidance in preserving the integrity of the radio broadcasting industry as a whole. Legitimizing "pirate operators" who have previously shown a disregard for FCC rules and guidelines does not preserve the integrity of the radio broadcasting industry!

Sincerely,

  
Carol Murphy, President  
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Gordon Thompson  
General Manager  
MIX 100 KIXR-FM

cc: Honorable Senator Don Nickles  
Honorable Senator Jim Inhofe  
Congressman Ernest Istook  
Carl Smith, Exec. Dir. OAB